HARAMBEE FLAME

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The '88 Campaign: Out In The Cold Again

Later this month, the Democratic Party will hold its convention in Atlanta. The political and media Establishment "experts" are breathing much more easily now than they were some months ago in this political season--back when it looked to them as though Michael Dukakis might not be able to make it to the convention with sufficient votes to get the presidential nomination on the first ballot; back when it looked to them as though Jesse Jackson might actually be able to bargain, with substantial delegate-vote leverage. Yes, a few months ago, the Democratic Party leadership was squirming, had changed their tune from "what does Jesse want" to "what in the hell are we going to do about Jesse." But eventually, Dukakis' Caucasian rivals dropped out of the Democratic campaign, paving the way for the predictable result--the decline of Jesse from the status of formidable challenger to that of also-ran. With there being but one Caucasian left in the race, the splitting of the Caucasian vote ceased to be a crucial factor.

Because Michael Dukakis will be going to the Atlanta convention with a clear majority of delegate votes, the Democratic leadership feels no need to do any serious bargaining with Jesse. It can be confident, based on Jesse's performance at the '84 convention, that a couple of liberal-sounding symbolic offerings will be sufficient to retain Jesse's loyalty. As we recall, Jackson went to the '84 convention with talk of withholding his support from the Party's nominee unless his "non-negotiable" demands were met. As we also recall, those "non-negotiable" demands were not met and Jesse Jackson threw his support behind Walter Mondale anyway.

In so doing, "the country preacher" took the po-

wer(in close elections) of the African vote and traded it away for either nothing or for a thus-far unidentified prize. He took what might have turned out to be a credible threat and transformed it into no more than an impotent bluff.

It is unlikely, if recent polls are a good indication, that there will be any Republican presidential landslide this time around, which means that the votes of the U.S.' African population will probably be crucial. Even though Jesse Jackson will not be able to have real leverage at the convention itself, he will have leverage in the post-convention campaign. The question is simply one of whether he will use it.

Unfortunately, too many of us have fallen into the trap of focusing on the question, as posed by the Caucasian political/media Establishment, of what it is that Jesse wants. The question we should be focusing on is what do we need?

What we need is to turn away from the politics of masochism to a politics of collective self-interest. It is not in our interest to continue supporting Democrats when the Democratic Party does not have an agenda which calls for the kind of radical change needed in order for our situation to be fundamentally improved. But our supposed leaders scream out, "but we must get the Republicans out of the White House," being completely oblivious of the fact that practically every Reagan policy and practice that we've condemned required the support and cooperation of a Democratically controlled Congress in order for them to be implemented.

We find ourselves stuck at the fork of a road, with one stretch marked "black America" and the other marked "Africa." Too many of us, unfortunately, follow the "black America" path in which we cannot even bear to think of being disloyal to our "white Democratic friends." This appears

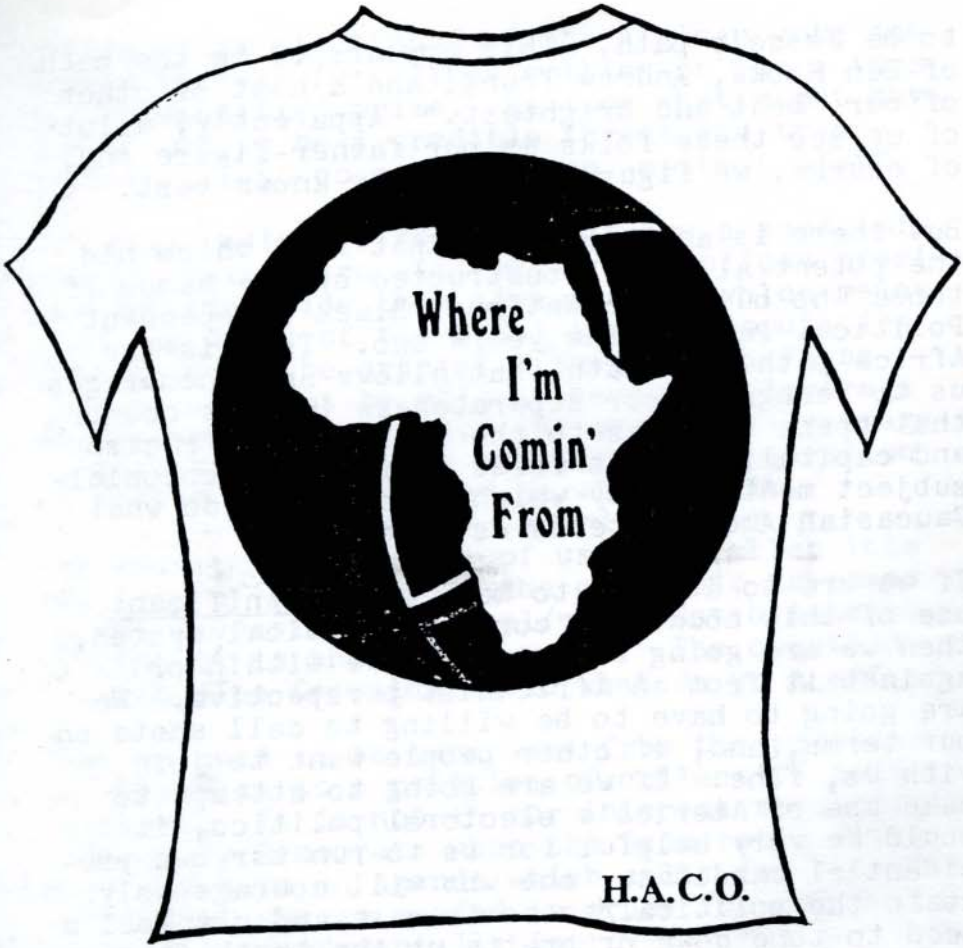
to be Jesse's path. This appears to be the path of Ben Hooks, Andrew Young, and a host of other of our "best and brightest." Apparently, a lot of us see these folks as our father-figure and, of course, we figure that father knows best.

But there is another path, that road which had the potential to be constructed by the hands of those who built the National Black Independent Political Party a few years ago. This is the Africa path, the path that allows and encourages us to recognize our separateness in this country, that opens our eyes to the realities of racism and capitalism, that frees us from the colonial-subject mentality by which we can only do what Caucasian America tells us to do.

If we are to attempt to make some <u>significant</u> use of this country's corrupt political system, then we are going to have to move within or against it from an Africanist perspective. We are going to have to be willing to call shots on our terms, and, if other people want to join with us, fine. If we are going to attempt to make use of America's electoral politics, it would be very helpful for us to run our own presidential candidate, one who will courageously state the political/economic case and not feel a need to tone down or pretty up the truth in order to make his or her message palatable to Caucasians.

If Jesse wants to be of more use to us than to himself, he will be in the presidential race after the convention and boldly send, with our help, a message to the political establishment; namely, "Dear Democrats, No more free ride."

Mondo



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red, black, and green emblem on red, black, or green shirt. Specify shirt color and size: small, medium, large, extra-large.

FLAME Editorial Policy

The HARAMBEE FLAME, the monthly publication of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(parent chapter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization, Inc.) is a pan-Africanist newsletter. This means that the FLAME's priority, with respect to news and views, is African people, events and developments which affect us and are, or should be, of concern to us. The FLAME does not recognize any artificial distinction between African people based solely on place of birth. Therefore, references to African people are made on the basis of our common ancestry. An exception to this is the reprinting of articles, or excerpts thereof, from other publications, in which cases we do not alter the terms used therein to fit our editorial policy.

Articles contained in the FLAME do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization unless they are accompanied by a statement identifying the views as being those of the organization. Generally speaking, all unsigned articles are by the editor, Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa(aka David Rice).

We encourage you to submit articles to the FLAME. Please enclose with your submission a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Articles should not exceed 900 words, though longer pieces will not automatically be rejected. Short stories are subject to the same restriction with respect to length. We also welcome poetry and graphics. Poems should make effective use of imagery and should <u>not</u> sacrifice poetry's natural beauty and power for the sake of rhyme and/or uniform rhythm patterns. Send your submissions to: HARAMBEE FLAME; Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization; Attn: Mondo; P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, NE.; 68502-0500.

From Other Sources

Convention To Draft Platform

"Just days before the Democrats arrive in town for their nominating convention scores of civil rights, peace, sanctuary, trade union, co-op, and independent political organizations from throughout the South and the nation will hold a convention of their own in Atlanta next month. The Fannie Lou Hamer Convention plans to draft a People's Platform to press a pro-people, pro-peace agenda on the Dukakis-dominated Democratic Party platform...

"...As of this writing 67 organizations have confirmed their participation, and organizers report that they expect over 100 groups to attend when the convention comes together on July 15...

"In addition to drafting a platform, convention organizers hope the gathering will adopt an Economic Bill of Rights and put together a legislative package that all the participating organizations can support...

"The Convention is working with the Rainbow Lobby, the independent citizen's lobby based in Washington, D.C., to put together a legislative package which includes the Jesse Gray Housing Bill, calling for the construction of five million new low income housing units, and California Congressman Ron Dellums' bill calling for full sanctions against the apartheid government of South Africa. The package incorporates legislation to repeal the Land Relocation Act, which is forcing the Hopi and Navaho nations in New Mexico off some of their lands. The package also includes support for H.R. 1582, the Fair Elections bill that would establish fair and uniform standards for independents running in

federal elections to get on the ballot in all 50 states..."

-Above passages excerpted from "Fannie Lou Hamer Convention To Draft People's Platform," which appears on pages 5 and 19 of the June 30 edition of THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE.

African Economic Situation In U.S.: Beneath the Official Stats

"...While overall official unemployment is 5.6 percent, it is more than 12 percent among workers who are Black. And nearly 35 percent among young people who are Black.

"In the Midwest, much of which has been traumatized by plant shutdowns and farm foreclosures, unemployment of Black workers has averaged more than 23 percent throughout the 1980s...

"Measured by 1986 dollars, 14 percent of B ack families now live on less than $5,000 a year, as compared to 8.9 percent in 1978. Thirty percent of all Black families live on less than $10,000, an increase from 27.4 percent in 1978...

"Today the best-off one-fifth of Black families receive 47.4 percent of the total income of Blacks, while the poorest one-fifth receive 3.4 percent. Averaging income and other statistics together for these two layers of the Black population disguises the brutality of the economic pressures bearing down on the big majority who are workers.

"From 1978 to 1986, the percent of Black families with annual incomes over $50,000 increased by 14 percent. But the percent of Black families trying to get by on less than $5,000 a year increased by 57 percent...

"The number of working-class families in which a woman is the sole income-earner has risen rapidly, and among Black families has soared from 25 percent in 1965 to 42 percent in 1986. The combined race and sex discrimination faced by these workers, along with utterly inadequate public child care and other social services, has resulted in a median income for these families of $7,999..."

-Above passages excerpted from "An Action Program To Confront The Coming Economic Crisis," which appears on pages 12 through 17 of the June 24 edition of THE MILITANT.

More Developments In Tawana Brawley Case

"...Last week Samuel McClease, a self-described surveillance expert, told WCBS-TV that in February Sharpton, in order to 'cover' himself if Tawana's story proved a hoax, hired him to wiretap Mason's home and office.

"The hoax, however, may have been McClease: U.S. Attorney Rudolph Giuliani, after trotting the 'expert' before a federal grand jury, announced the tapes he'd turned over were blank and jailed him for obstruction of justice..."

-Above passages excerpted from "Brawley Case: Much Ado, Little Information," which appears on page 2 of the July 6 edition of THE GUARDIAN.

Haitian Military Poses Problems For U.S.

"...A second problem the U.S. confronts in Haiti is the situation in the Haitian military. Under the rule of 'Papa Doc' Duvalier, in order to counterbalance the army and prevent a coup d'etat, the Tontons Macoute were created as Duvalier's

own personal militia. Then under 'Baby Doc' Duvalier the counterinsurgency force known as the 'Leopards' was formed and trained by the United States. The legacy of this kind of development - a military divided into a number of seperate units with their own allegiances - remains to this day. While the Haitian armed forces total only about 7,000 troops, there are many commanders who function almost as autonomous warlords with small private squadrons.

"From the U.S.'s point of view this is a big problem. Constantly erupting contradictions among various factions in the military makes for a very unstable as well as ineffectual force. And independent 'warlords' are sometimes liable to do whatever they want regardless of U.S. demands. The integration of the Tontons Macoute in the army after Duvalier fled only made this situation more extreme, especially as the government had to try and publicly distance itself from the most exposed Macoute forces. So in this sense the U.S. faces a situation where Haiti's military cannot be relied on a hundred percent to carry out the U.S.'s wishes. As part of trying to deal with this problem the U.S. has put pressure on the Haitian government to make the military more 'professionalized'...

...

-Above passages excerpted from "Haiti: Who Threw The Palace Crew," which appears on pages 1, 12, and 13 of the June 27 edition of REVOLUTIONARY WORKER.

Africa: Birthplace Of AIDS?

"...In recent years, much of the scientific as well as the popular literature dealing with the origins of the human immunodeficiency virus(HIV) - which is believed to cause AIDS - has pointed to Africa as the incubator of the disease...

"The case against those assumptions has been most comprehensively by Richard and Rosalind Chirimuuta, whose book, AIDS, AFRICA AND RACISM, was published recently in Britain.

"The Chirimuutas argue that Western researchers have been more influenced than they realize by a pervasive racism that associates black people with 'dirt, disease, ignorance and an animal-like sexual promiscuity'. The result, the Chirimuutas say, is conclusions that have been reached by flawed research methods, questionable data and unscientific, illogical leaps from observations to conclusions...

"The widespread heory that the African green monkey somehow transmitted the AIDS virus to humans is also coming under closer scrutiny. In the June 2 issue of NATURE, a British scientific periodical, Carel Mulder of the University of Massachusetts Medical School writes that differences in the viruses identified in monkeys and in humans indicate that 'the human viruses cannot have originated from African green monkeys in recent times, as had been predicted by many people'. Mulder says that claim 'was usually based on what was very probably a case of mistaken identity' - the identification of the monkey virus with its human variant...

"'In 1980',writes reporter Peter Murtagh in an article on Kenya, 'some of the prostitutes were tested for AIDS at their local sexually transmitted disease clinic. At that time, none was HIV positive. Three years later, 53 percent were...'

"The Chirimuutas point out that AIDS was first recognized in the United States in 1981, and that the AIDS blood test was only introduced in 1984...

"The Chirimuutas cite possible explanations for

what they believe are inflated estimates of the number of African AIDS cases. Among them are studies suggesting that AIDS tests on Africans have an unusually high false positive rate - perhaps because diseases endemic in parts of Africa, such as malaria, may trigger a false result..."

-Above passages excerpted from "African Origin Disputed," which appears on page 11 of the June 13 edition of AFRICA NEWS.

New Base To Strengthen Angolan Defenses

"Cuban military engineers are nearing completion of an air base in southern Angola, equipped with modern antiaircraft weapons, reported the June 7 LONDON GUARDIAN. The air base being built at Xangongo in the province of Cunene just 40 miles north of the Namibian border is symbolic of the significant change in the balance of forces in southern Angola over the past few months...

"The new base will significantly strengthen Angola's defenses against air strikes from the three main South African bases in Namibia just south of the Angolan border..."

-Above passages excerpted from "Cubans Building Angolan Air Base," which appears on page 11 of the July 1 edition of THE MILITANT.

Caucasian Population In Zimbabwe Misses Days Of Superior Status

"...A recent visitor to Zimbabwe noted that many whites appeared to be stiffening their disdain for majority rule, with more white supremacist symbols, such as the old Rhodesian flag, now on display. 'Are you worried about this seeming

disloyalty'? he asked Mugabe.

"'Yes, we are', the Zimbabwean leader replied, 'and to a very great extent. We have bent over backwards to achieve reconciliation, and the response has not been as complete as we wanted --there is still the appearance of people holding back. At independence we gave the whites a choice of citizenship, and those who remained have made the choice to be Zimbabweans. There has to be a single allegiance, a sense of belonging.

"...'They seem in a state of shock from this reversal, but eight years should be long enough for anybody to adjust. We are most disturbed', he added, 'that parents are taking their children on this path. They resent having to send them to school with blacks, and they won't allow their children to participate in public events, especially celebrations marking our independence.

"'But we will not accept that the old way of life be demonstrated in public. We allow no exclusive schools with a white majority--they want private schools, private hospitals with high fees that only they and a small sector of black Zimbabweans can afford. We won't allow this..."

-Above passages excerpted from "Mugabe Says Socialism, Yes--But Slowly," which appears on page 13 of the June 29 edition of THE GUARDIAN.

People Of Color Especially Threatened By Dumping

"Toxic waste dumping in West Africa and the Caribbean, as well as in U.S. third world communities, came under attack this month from a wide range of sources.

"A study by the Commission for Racial Justice (CRJ) of the United Church of Christ, citing racism as a factor in the location of dumping

grounds, was quoted by opponents of a propsed nuclear waste dump in west Texas.

"And Greenpeace, the activist environmental group, demonstrated in California against a plan by two companies located in the state to build a commercial toxic waste incinerator in Guyana...

"In the U.S., the CRJ study found that communities characterized by heavy minority population, economic depression and little political power are likely to host hazardous waste dumps...

"...dumping in West Africa has resulted in the embargo of an Italian cargo ship in Nigeria and the arrest of Norway's consul-general to Guinea. The Norwegian official was arrested in Conakry last week for complicity in attempts to secretly dump 15,000 tons of toxic waste which, according to the Nigerians, it illegally dumped off the coast of the southern state of Bendel..."

-Above passages excerpted from "Third World Communities Serve As Toxic Dumps," which appears on page 17 of the June 22 edition of THE GUARDIAN.

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Back In Time

...there are persons in this Legislature to-day, who are ready to spit their poison in my face, while they themselves opposed, with all their power, the ratification of this Constitution. They question my right to a seat in this body, to represent the people whose legal votes elected me....We are told that if black men want to speak, they must speak through white trumpets; if black men want their sentiments expressed, they must be adulterated and sent through white messengers, who will quibble, and equivocate, and evade, as rapidly as the pendulum of a clock. If this be not done, then the black men have committed an outrage, and their Representatives must be denied the right to represent their constituents.

The great question, sir, is this: Am I a man? If I am such, I claim the rights of a man. Am I not a man because I happen to be of a darker hue than honorable gentlemen around me?

We have pioneered civilization here; we have built up your country; we have worked in your fields, and garnered your harvests, for two hundred and fifty years! And what do we ask of you in return? Do we ask you for compensation for the sweat our fathers bore for you--for the tears you have caused, and the hearts you have broken, and the lives you have curtailed, and the blood you have spilled? Do we ask retaliation? We ask it not. We are willing to let the dead past bury its dead; but we ask you now for our rights.

You have all the elements of superiority upon your side; you have our money and your own; you have our education and your own; and you have your land and our own, too. We, who number hundreds of thousands in Georgia, including our wives and families, with not a foot of land to call our own--strangers in the land of our birth;

Announcements

Upcoming Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization programs: July 26 - A'Jamal Rashad Byndon will give a presentation on issues related to the imprisonment of African men in this country. August 9 - "The First World Negro Arts Festival," a film showing music, dance, sculpture, painting, etc. at a 1966 festival in Dakar.

We urge our Brothers and Sisters in the Omaha-Lincoln area to get involved with us. We meet four times per month, on Tuesdays and Sundays. To inquire about attending meetings and/or giving a presentation(s), write to: Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization; Attn: Mondo; P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, NE; 68502-0500. Or call 471-3161 (ext. 380 or 379) and ask for the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Org. sponsor, Mon.-Fri., 12:30-3p.m.

(Continued from previous page)

without money, without education, without aid, without a roof to cover us while we live, nor sufficient clay to cover us when we die!...

You may expel us, gentlemen, but I firmly believe that you will someday repent it. The black man cannot protect a country, if the country doesn't protect him; and if, tomorrow, a war should arise, I would not raise a musket to defend a country where my manhood is denied...

(From a speech delivered to the Georgia Legislature on September 3, 1868 by an African member of that body, Henry MacNeal Turner, as he spoke out against the Legislature's expulsion of himself and the other African legislators.)

Source: A HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN NEGRO
Edited by Milton Meltzer

NACHRAL

your hair
your tight-curled
balled-up-inta-wiry-fisted
comb-resistin
brush-defyin
fittin-on-your-head-like-a-
crown-of-sponge-feelin-
crest-of-lush-black-vine-
entanglement-lookin
hair...

your cornsilk-soft curls runnin
in a thin faint trail
down
to spread
as if a wooly ink
expanding
from subtle trail abruptly
to explode
into a wedge profuse
in regal bushiness.

Mondo